

Message Text

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ACTION MCT-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SY-05 EB-08 COME-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /066 W
-----221220Z 038063 /10
P 212115Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7015

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FOR AMBASSADOR HECK

EO 11652 NA
TAGS: ASEC PINS VE
SUBJ: NIEHOUS KIDNAPPING - NEW MESSAGE FROM KIDNAPPERS
RECEIVED

1. AFTER A SILENCE OF MORE THAN SEVEN MONTHS, THE KIDNAPPERS OF US INDUSTRIALIST WILLIAM NIEHOUS, OR A GROUP PURPORTING TO BE NIEHOUS' ABDUCTORS, SUDDENLY RELEASED A NEW MESSAGE MARCH 19 ADDRESSED TO THE VENEZUELAN PEOPLE WHICH WAS DELIVERED TO THREE CARACAS NEWSPAPERS. ALTHOUGH THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE MESSAGE HAS NOT YET BEEN ESTABLISHED, IT CLAIMS THAT NIEHOUS HAS UNDERGONE A "PEOPLE'S TRIAL," THUS RAISING THE HOPE THAT NIEHOUS IS STILL ALIVE. THE THREE NEWSPAPERS IN THEIR MARCH 20 EDITIONS CARRIED BRIEF EXCERPTS FROM THE NEW COMMUNICATION ALLEGEDLY FROM THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMANDOS GROUP, ARGIMIRO GABALDON OPERATION, THE GROUP WHICH CLAIMS CREDIT FOR KIDNAPPING NIEHOUS ON FEB 27, 1976. THE NEWSPAPERS WERE TOLD OVER THE PHONE WHERE TO RETRIEVE THE ONE-PAGE MIMEOGRAPHED MESSAGE. REPORTEDLY ATTACHED TO THE MESSAGE WAS A PHOTOCOPY OF TWO PAGES OF NIEHOUS' PASSPORT.

2. THAT PART OF THE MESSAGE WHICH REFERRED TO NIEHOUS
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SAID THAT A "REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL" HAD BROUGHT CHARGES AGAINST NIEHOUS BASED ON SOLID PROOF OF HIS "GUILT" IN HAVING COMMITTED BRIBERY, INTERFERED IN VENEZUELA'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS, VIOLATED THE NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY, AND ENGAGED IN INFLUENCE PEDDLING. MOREOVER, THE MESSAGE ACCUSES FIVE OTHER INDUSTRIALISTS AND PROFESSIONAL PERSONS OF BEING INVOLVED IN THESE "CRIMES". ALTHOUGH THESE FIVE PERSONS HAVE NOT

YET BEEN CAPTURED, THE AUTHORS OF THE NEW COMMUNICATION INDICATE THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE WITH THE "PEOPLE'S TRIAL" AGAINST THEM.

3. AS IN OTHER PRESS RELEASES FROM NIEHOUS' CAPTORS LAST YEAR, THE NEW MESSAGE ATTACKS THE GOV, ESPOUSES LEFTIST POLITICAL GOALS, THREATENS TO CARRYOUT OTHER TERRORIST ACTS, AND ACCUSES THE AUTHORITIES OF REPRESSIVE ACTIONS AGAINST REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITSTS. MOREOVER, THE COMMUNICATION MAINTAINS THAT THE PRESS HAS TRIED TO DISCREDIT THE KIDNAPPERS BY PORTRAYING THEM AS CRIMINALS AND BY PUBLICIZING STATEMENTS BY INTERIOR MINISTER OCTAVIO LAPAGE THAT NIEHOUS "MAY HAVE BEEN EXECUTED BY THE GROUP HOLDING HIM CAPTIVE."

4. LEPAGE TOLD REPORTERS MARCH 20 THAT HE HAD NOT YET SEEN THE TEXT OF THE NEW MESSAGE, BUT THE INTERIOR MINISTRY SECURITY POLICE (DISIP) WERE CHECKING ITS AUTHENTICITY. HE REPEATED ONCE AGAIN THAT WITH FIVE OF NIEHOUS' KIDNAPPERS NOW IN JAIL THE ONLY THING REMAINING IS TO DISCOVER NIEHOUS' HIDING PLACE.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE BEEN PROMISED BY THE INTERIOR MINISTRY A COPY OF THIS NEW COMMUNICATION IN THENEXT SEVERAL HOURS. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE MESSAGE IS NOT VERY EXPLICIT AND APPARENTLY DOES NOT SAY CATEGORICALLY THAT NIEHOUS IS ALIVE. FURTHERMORE, THERE IS SO FAR NO PROOF THAT THE MESSAGE IS FROM THE GROUP RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NIEHOUS KIDNAPPING. THIS LATTER POINT SHOULD BE CLEARED UP IN A DAY OR TWO. WITHOUT JIMPIING TO CONCLUSIONS, IF THE MESSAGE'S AUTHENTICITY IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ESTABLISHED, IT MAY BE A FAINT INDICATION THAT NIEHOUS IS STILL ALIVE.
VAKY

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KIDNAPPING, BUSINESSMEN, TERRORISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 21-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CARACA02841
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770097-1070
Format: TEL
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770340/aaaabioi.tel
Line Count: 100
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION MCT
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Date: 20-Apr-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3052239
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NIEHOUS KIDNAPPING - NEW MESSAGE FROM KIDNAPPERS RECEIVED
TAGS: ASEC, PINS, CASC, VE, US, (NIEHOUS, WILLIAM F)
To: STATE
Type: TE
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Review Markings:
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